

Case 3277***Chitra chitra* Nutaphand, 1986 (Reptilia, Testudines): proposed precedence of the specific name over that of *Chitra selenkae* Jaekel, 1911**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Articles 23.9.3 and 81.2.3 of the Code, is to conserve the widely used name *Chitra chitra* Nutaphand, 1986 for the Narrow-headed Softshell turtle (Testudines; family TRIONYCHIDAE) found in Thailand, Malaysia and on the islands of Sumatra and Java, Indonesia, by giving it precedence over the neglected palaeontological name *Chitra selenkae* Jaekel, 1911, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Reptilia; Testudines; TRIONYCHIDAE; *Chitra chitra*; *Chitra selenkae*; Narrow-headed Softshell turtles; Thailand; Malaysia; Indonesia.

1. In 1911, the name *Chitra selenkae* was given to a small collection of fossilized turtle bones from several *Chitra* specimens found in Java, Indonesia, by Jaekel (1911, p. 80; see table XV). This name has been unused since its original publication (see 'Notes added in proof' in McCord & Pritchard, 2003, pp. 55–56 for details). However, as the name was used after 1899, it cannot be 'automatically' declared a nomen oblitum under Articles 23.9.1.1 and 23.9.2.

2. In 1986, the Thai biologist Wirot Nutaphand (p. 66; see pl. on p. 65) recognized the Narrow-headed Softshell turtle of Thailand as specifically distinct from *Chitra indica* (Gray, 1831) that is found on the Indian subcontinent (*C. indica* is the type species by monotypy of *Chitra* Gray, 1844) and assigned it the name *Chitra chitra* (see McCord & Pritchard, 2003, p. 18). Note that Nutaphand (Nutphand in some works) is sometimes referred to by his first name in the literature, making the full citation of this name *Chitra chitra* Wirot, 1986. Although, application of the first name is traditional for everyday usage in Thailand, we follow the convention in zoological nomenclature of using the author's surname. *C. chitra* has been used in reference to the Narrow-headed Softshell from Thailand, peninsular Malaysia and Indonesia in at least 31 works, by at least 59 authors encompassing a span of not less than ten years in the last 50 years (e.g. see all references except Gray (1831, 1844) and Jaekel (1911) given in the reference list below: further references are held by the Commission Secretariat), thus meeting the criteria for reversal of precedence in Article 23.9.1.2.

3. Since Nutaphand's (1986) work, it has been widely accepted (e.g. Engstrom, Shaffer & McCord (2002, pp. 176–178); McCord & Pritchard (2003, pp. 35–37)) that

the Recent Thai, Malaysian and Indonesian populations of *C. chitra* turtles are conspecific. According to the Principle of Priority, if the fossil remains from Java named *C. selenkae* are also conspecific with the above, the name *C. selenkae* would be the valid name for this species. However, use of the senior synonym would cause nomenclatural confusion as the name *C. chitra* is in widespread use (see reference list below, with the exception of Gray (1831, 1844) and Jaekel (1911)).

4. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to give the name *chitra* Nutaphand, 1986, as published in the binomen *Chitra chitra*, precedence over the name *selenkae* Jaekel, 1911, as published in the binomen *Chitra selenkae*, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *chitra* Nutaphand, 1986, as published in the binomen *Chitra chitra*, with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over the name *selenkae* Jaekel, 1911, as published in the binomen *Chitra selenkae*, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms;
 - (b) *selenkae* Jaekel, 1911, as published in the binomen *Chitra selenkae*, with the endorsement that it is not to be given priority over *chitra* Nutaphand, 1986, as published in the binomen *Chitra chitra*, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.

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Chitra c. javanensis McCord & Pritchard, 2003, the recently described subspecies of *Chitra chitra* Nutaphand, 1986 found on the Indonesian island of Java.